

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending (new claim 15 being added by this amendment).

In the aforesaid Office Action, claims 9 and 12 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and claims 1-8, 10-11, 13 and 14 were allowed.

The Examiner rejected claims 9 and 12 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, stating, in part, that claim 9 references a step (g) not recited in claim 1, and claim 12 recites “the intact tube” for which there is insufficient antecedent basis. Applicants have amended claims 9 and 12 accordingly. Support for amended claim 9 can be found in the second paragraph of the Summary section and the fourth paragraph of the Detailed Description, which disclose repeatedly compressing the tubular layer.

Support for new claim 15 can be found in the second to the last paragraph of the Detailed Description, which discloses that the polyurethane tube is intact (i.e., not cut or torn during removal) and remained in the housing, ready to perform additional compressions.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration, and issuance of a timely Notice of Allowance.

The commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiencies in fees or credit any overpayments to our Deposit Account No. 06-2425.

Respectfully submitted,

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